2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
1958 MM1 Aden MM1

their thoughts and hands to the production once again of merchant ships.

It is interesting to note that immediately before the Suez crisis in 1956 over 5,000 ships a year, representing more than twenty-two million net registered tons of shipping were calling at Aden. They took some four million tons of oil away from the harbour in their bunkers, much of which was supplied by the Aden Refinery which was completed in 1953.

The consequence of all this was a considerable expansion of business, not only in the port, but also in the Colony as a whole, and more and more people flocked in from the mainland and from overseas to supply the labour required by merchants and by building contractors who were beginning to make good the time that had been wasted during the war years, when building in any form other than for purely military purposes had been impossible. The consequences, or one of them, of this influx of people was to make the housing shortage acute and was to cause me, as a Legislative Councillor, many weary evenings on Committees. At the same time our shortage of staff and floating craft was a major preoccupation during my mornings and evenings in the Port Trust building. Skilled men were almost impossible to find, and high wages were not the solution to the problem, because everybody had been abroad during the war and now that it was over everyone wanted to stay at home; added to which there was the six-year gap represented by the war years in the production of skilled men, in particular in the engineering profession. It was a difficult time, but we overcame the major obstacles and the port was never forced to close even for an hour. Sickness reduced our ranks temporarily and tugs broke down and launches ran into each other, but the work went on, thanks to the supreme loyalty of the Port Trust employees.

Eventually more pilots were recruited and half-fledged engineers found and pilot launches and a new tug ordered, but as soon as the men could be found and the craft launched so the demand increased, and in 1951 when I left the Port Trust my task was still far from complete. All our time, however, was

2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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with us and was now returning to his work somewhere on the Abiyan plain. I had no armed escort from the Government Guards. The safety of my companions and myself rested with the Sultan who was fully prepared to accept his responsibility. In fact, if I had attempted to take an armed escort on this particular trip, we would almost certainly have never got to Al Qara at all. The independent-minded tribesmen would undoubtedly have resisted the movement of armed men into their country and we should have been faced with the alternative of turning back or having to force a passage. Not really an alternative because I had not, in those days, a sufficient force at my disposal to overcome spirited resistance from thousands of tribesmen in that tangle of hills.

QUAITI

Both during my term of office as Governor and during my earlier periods of service in Aden I paid frequent visits to Mukalla, the capital of the Quaiti State in the Eastern Aden Protectorate, which nestles below a high hill feature on which stand the now empty watch towers that in days gone by protected the wealthy merchants of the town from bedouin raiders. Mukalla has a fascinating little harbour and the town is grouped attractively round a bay filled with the bluest water that I have ever seen. Viewed from the broad beach outside the ancient gateway as the sun is setting, the town and the hill behind it are suffused with a golden light, and the slender white minarets of the Mosques are a delicate shade of pink. It is really beautiful.

Here in Mukalla are not only the business houses of the merchants who trade with the Far East and Aden and supply the Hadhramaut with its innumerable wants, but also the palace of the Sultan, the British Residency, and the Government Offices of the Quaiti administration. Outside the walls of the town are the depot of the Hadhrami Bedouin Legion and the barracks of the Mukalla Regular Army and the Quaiti Armed Constabulary. Here also is the Bedouin Boys' School, a boarding school for the sons of tribesmen run by the State on the

245 camel from the high hills of the interior. Coffee will not grow below 4,000 ft. at the latitude of Aden and the Yemen.

244 Away to the east on the Audhali plateau and in the other
243 high regions, wheat and barley are cultivated by well water
312 irrigation from shallow wells, and apricot trees grow naturally
245 among the fields and grape vines run over the trees that border the grassy valleys. Much attention has been given to increasing the fruit cultivation and to the growing of tomatoes and other
[177] vegetables in the summer time when the low lying plains are far too hot. Plums and apples and peaches and walnuts have been introduced successfully, and lower down citrus culti-
262 vation has had surprisingly good results. Originally, of course,
178 the idea was that these fruits and vegetables would be available
433 to the Colony markets and to a certain extent this has proved to be true, but no-one anticipated the extent to which local consumption of vegetables and fruit would increase in the
(177) Protectorate itself. It is extraordinary how quickly people will develop a taste for new varieties of vegetables, as I had found in Muscat when I first introduced cabbages. Nobody had seen them before and at first I had to give them away and persuade people to eat them, but it was not long before they came and helped themselves. It was much the same in the Protectorate with lettuce, which was looked upon with distrust when I first travelled to Loder and Mukeiras, but by the time I left twenty-five years later no meal was complete without a dish of salad.

243 Down in the plains the main crops are sorghum and bullrush
262 millet which grow throughout the Protectorate and provide the staple diet of the people who grind and pound the grain into coarse flour from which they make a very palatable un-
245 leavened bread. Where water is available in sufficient quantity
312 as at Lahej and in the Wadi Hadhrami, there are extensive
244 date-palm plantations and bananas, and other Eastern fruits are cultivated with particular emphasis on the melons which flourish abundantly and are of excellent quality.

241 Two things have handicapped agricultural development in
441 the Protectorate. The first of these is lack of money and the second lack of a suitable marketing organisation. The power to

Protectorate Development

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remedy the first need was never in my hands, but the opportunity to produce some form of marketing organisation was, and it has taken shape and should be on the way to finding new and extending old markets for the fruit and vegetables of the Protectorate. It will have to overcome the conservative ideas of the Boards of Directors of Shipping Companies who prefer the more expensive Egyptian produce nicely wrapped up in pink paper to cheaper and better quality produce unwrapped. Nasser has possibly helped the Marketing Officer indirectly, and a judicious purchase of pink paper and elegant crates, for which of course they will be charged, will persuade the P. & O. S.N. Company, The Orient Line, the British India and other Shipping Companies to support a Protectorate which has so far remained loyal in the face of grave provocation. I made every effort I could personally to interest the vast purchasing power of the 22,000,000 net registered tons of shipping using Aden port every year, but I made no impression.

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The primary need was undoubtedly for money, but that was the one thing that was not forthcoming in sufficient quantity to make any real impression. During the eighty-nine years that India was responsible for the Protectorate not one single penny was made available for any form of development or for the provision of any form of social service. Since 1928 when the Colonial Office became responsible for the 112,000 square miles and the 800,000 or so inhabitants, the average annual subvention would amount to £90,000 or 1.35*d.* per head of population. A total sum of £2,000,000 has been made available from the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund and no direct grant, other than the £10,000 in 1940 for food production, was made for development purposes before the inception of that fund. If the whole or the major portion of this sum could have been devoted to agricultural projects much might now have been completed which has still to be started, but the demands of the Health and the Education Services had to be considered and the improvement of communications was a major item which consumed more than half of this sum, and the amount left for agricultural development, which would

new displacing the old is an inevitable process and provided it is done at a reasonable pace need not be disturbing and is often imperceptible. It is the speed of change which matters, and that is what caused the trouble in the Protectorate. In England the change from horse-drawn transport to motor transport took twenty years or more and there was ample time for readjustment. In Aden it took as many days from the time a new major road was open to motor traffic, and the unemployed camel men sat nursing their rifles and wondering how to prevent their animals and themselves from starving. It was not long before they noticed the weapon in their hands and commenced to use it to drive the lorries off the roads. The State and Political Authorities intervened before too much damage was done and negotiations resulted in agreements which restricted the use of lorries to named kinds of merchandise, and so time was gained for readjustment.

The Eastern Aden Protectorate was more affected than the Western by road development and on more than one occasion troops had to be used to persuade the camel men and their friends to be sensible and not to interfere with the lorry traffic which might have had very serious consequences. The Wadi Hadhramaut, that vast cut through the limestone plateau of the Jöl filled with palm groves and white-walled towns, peopled by the most astute and the hardest business men in the world, was subject to droughts which twice in living memory had led to famine: the reason for this had been that the whole irrigation system depended on the availability of bullocks to draw water from the shallow wells and when, during the droughts, the corn crops had failed, the animals had either to be fed on seed grain or be left to die of starvation; in the former case it meant that when the rains did come, there was no seed to sow, in the latter that there were no animals to draw water. The solution was to eliminate the dependence on bullocks and make available to farmers and date garden owners small diesel pumps with which to irrigate their land. They paid cash for the pumps if they could, or if they couldn't they put down a deposit and paid the balance in monthly instalments. A maintenance service, based on a central workshop, which had been set

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

From the "Upper Circle" 1958

000 TWO years have passed since I left Aden and ceased to take an active part in the South Arabian drama, and much has happened in the Middle East in that comparatively short space of time. I feel, therefore, that this work would not be complete if I did not refer briefly to major events which have directly and indirectly had their effect on both the Colony and the Protectorate. I do so as a spectator far removed from the Arabian stage, and in consequence I may have missed some of the finer points, but the general theme of the play has not been too difficult to follow.

829 This is neither the place nor the time to examine the pros and cons of the action taken by the British Government in conjunction with the French Government following on the seizure in 1956 of the Suez Canal by President Nasser of Egypt. It is the effect of that action on the people of Aden with which I am concerned. At first the landing at Suez surprised and bewildered moderates and extremists in the Colony alike, but when the initial shock had worn off the moderates voiced their disapproval in reasonable language and the extremists made the most of the aggression aspect of the affair and condemned the, to their way of thinking, unprovoked attack upon an Arab country. There were those, but they were very few, who were prepared to say plainly that they hoped our action would result in the downfall of Nasser. But whatever may have been said in public there were many who in private desired our success, though they could not approve the method we had employed.

441 The trading community was gravely disturbed, not so much
434 by the possible political consequences of Suez, but by the
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2: Hickinbotham G-4, 5 (ca. 1931-ca. 1957)
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actual effect the closure of the Canal must have on their own business interests. Events showed that they had good reason to be concerned. Shipping fell away rapidly. The monthly average of ships entering the port of Aden for the six months prior to the crisis, that is, from May to October 1956, was 454. In November only 277 ships used the port, and by February 1957 the number was down to 93, the lowest point to be reached. Business throughout the Colony was similarly affected and the trade with passengers, on which the merchants of Steamer Point depend for their livelihood, virtually ceased as all passenger ships were diverted round the Cape.

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The finances of the Colony were dealt a blow from which they have yet to recover and behind the immediate and, it was hoped, temporary dislocation of trade, there lurked the fear that the major Shipping Companies having once become accustomed to routing their ships by the Cape to Australia and the Far East, would continue to do so even when the Canal was open once again to world shipping. Mercifully for the Government of Aden and the trading community and all who depended upon them and the port for their living this fear proved to be groundless. Once the Canal was cleared and reopened the volume of shipping returned to normal much earlier than had been expected by the most optimistic.

The bright side of the picture was that in spite of the divergence of views over Suez, personal relations between Government officials and their Arab friends remained unimpaired. At the same time the example of moderation shown by the local Press, in particular in the English language, was one which even the newspapers in the United Kingdom would have done well to have followed. All newspapers in Aden are Arab or Indian-owned and the two main English language papers are both Arab owned and Arab edited. All the more commendable, therefore, was their restraint during this most difficult period.

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In the Protectorate the reaction was somewhat different. There was satisfaction that Her Majesty's Government had, at last, shown that they were capable of strong and determined action and with it was born a hope in the hearts of the Rulers on the Yemen frontier that it would be the turn of that country

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5:Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-8 (1947) 1949 MM1 Aden MM1

Chapter 4: Currency and Banking

436 The official currency of the Colony is the Indian rupee. Exchange at par
42 is Re. 1 to 1s. 6d.

The amount of currency in circulation in December, 1947, was estimated to be:

Coin, Rs. 3,00,000 Paper, Rs. 2,00,00,000

453 The following banks operate in Aden:
The National Bank of India Ltd.
The Exchange Bank of India and Africa Ltd.
Messrs. Cowasjee Dinshaw & Bros.

[454] There is one Savings Bank operated by the Post Office: depositors, 2,411; deposits, Rs. 11,40,149; and capital, Rs. 20,13,916. The deposits are invested in gilt-edged securities in London.

Chapter 5: Commerce

439 Apart from the export of salt, the bulk of the trade of Aden falls into two main classes, namely, entrepot and transhipment.

The raw produce of neighbouring countries is transhipped at Aden to the markets of the world, and manufactured goods arrive at Aden for transhipment to consuming countries in the vicinity. The importance of Aden as a bunkering port for supplies of coal and oil ensures frequent shipping opportunities. The salient features of the import trade are repeated in the export figures, as the bulk of imports are re-exported. The principal business is in skins, hides, coffee, cotton piece-goods, cotton yarns, dates, grain, pulse and flour, sugar, tea, spices, oils, tobacco, gum, shells and salt.

[441] The entrepot trade is in the hands of large merchants, European, Indian and Arab.

6:Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1948) 1950 MM1 Aden MM1

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Chapter 6: Production

SALT

The principal native product of Aden is salt, made from sea-water by solar evaporation in a series of pans 3,682 acres in extent. The export in 1948 amounted to 261,361 tons.

This industry is in the hands of four manufacturers, one Italian, under the management of the Custodian of Enemy Property, and three Indian. The year 1948 showed a considerable improvement in production as compared with the previous two years. The tonnage produced during the last five years is given below:

Year	*Quantity of salt produced in tons*
1944	205,308
1945	139,945
1946	113,042
1947	194,549
1948	271,108

FISHERIES

The coast of the Colony proper extends for approximately 16 sea miles as the crow flies, but is much indented. The bottom shelves steadily to around 50 fathoms 10 miles offshore, beyond which it falls sharply to over 100 fathoms.

In general the fishing is not to be compared with that of the Eastern Aden Protectorate. During the South-West Monsoon, however, an easterly migration of shoals of large pelagic fish occurs and, while these are in the vicinity, heavy landings may take place. During the summer of 1948 this fishery was well below average. For the remainder of the year, migratory fish occur spasmodically and the location of shoals calls for skill and experience.

Bottom fish are few and small except on certain rocky patches where handlines and basket traps achieve good results.

There are approximately 1,300 fishermen whose homes are in the Colony. Many of them migrate with the fish shoals along the Protectorate coast and, when fish are abundant at Aden, Protectorate fishermen come to fish in the Colony.

?: Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1949-50) 1951 MM1 Aden MM1

439 Control was relaxed on the local sale and distribution of margarine, cooking fats, butter and cheese, as supplies were fairly plentiful. Pepper was also decontrolled.

435 Rice, flour and sugar have continued to be imported by Government,
439 and distribution and prices were strictly controlled until July, 1950, when rice was decontrolled, as supplies seemed adequate. There was a small decrease in the price of rice at the beginning of 1950, but prices have risen again. It had been hoped to remove all restrictions on the import of flour, but it was decided on the recommendation of the Trade Advisory Board that Government should continue to import flour until the end of the Australian wheat year; the price was kept down by adjustments from the equalisation fund. The price of sugar rose 43 per cent above that of 1949.

The control of petrol was completely relaxed in June, 1950, but owing to devaluation the price of petroleum products has risen. Iron and steel tubes, pipes and fittings still remain subject to an allocation system, but all other iron and steel goods have been freed from control. Supplies of cement appear to be adequate and, at the request of the Chamber of Commerce, sources of supply other than the United Kingdom have been included in the programme for 1951.

439 Trade with Japan and Western Germany was resumed in 1949.

The export position has caused some dissatisfaction owing to restrictions by Eritrea and Somalia on the importation of goods from Aden.

It was decided to limit the countries to which hides and skins could be exported in order to defeat the practice of sending these goods to certain territories, whence they were re-exported to hard currency areas, without earning any hard currency for the sterling area.

457 The exchange control position has greatly altered since devaluation.
435 The new dollar value of sterling is below the local black market rate and below the free market rate which operated in Ethiopia. As a result merchants are surrendering their dollars freely to control and the Colony's dollar earnings have increased substantially.

During the summer of 1949 an attempt to evade control on a large scale was discovered and as a result illicit transactions have been reduced.

It has been possible to release dollars to cover adequately the major part of Aden's essential requirements from the dollar area, and any dissatisfaction which merchants may feel from the refusal to allocate a percentage of the dollars earned by them as an incentive should be more than balanced by the overall advantages which accrue to them as members of the sterling area.

441 A Trade Advisory Board was set up early in 1950 consisting of four
647 local merchants, with the Controller of Civil Supplies as Chairman, to review any trade or economic matter which is causing friction; and to consider all matters concerning the trade of Aden as an entrepôt port. It is also intended that the Board should advise on the most suitable means of giving effect to the operation of controls.

8:Gt. Brit., Colonial Office G-3 (1951-52)1954 MM1 Aden MM1

Chapter 4: Currency and Banking

436 Indian currency was legal tender up to 30th September, 1951, thereafter the East African shilling became the legal currency in the Colony and Protectorate.

The amount in circulation on 31st December, 1952, was:

Coin . . £192,264. Notes . . £3,828,136.

453 The banks operating in the territory are:

485 The National Bank of India Ltd.
The Eastern Bank Ltd.
The British Bank of Middle East.
Messrs. Cowasjee Dinshaw & Bros.

There is one Savings Bank operated by the Post Office. The amounts deposited in it and the number of depositors were:

	1951	1952
Number of depositors or members	3,595	4,022
Total Deposits . .	*Shs.*5,774,584	*Shs.*5,990,820
Total Capital . .	*Shs.*5,792,332	*Shs.*6,020,112

The foreign exchange rates in force are as follows:

	Bank Selling Demand & T.T.	*Bank Buying Demand & T.T.*
Sterling . . .	100⅛ & 100 3/16	99⅛ & 99 3/16
U.S.A. $ . .	*Shs.* 715=$100	*Shs.* 705=$100
Canadian $ . .	*Shs.* 729=$100	*Shs.* 720=$100
Swiss Francs . .	*Shs.* 100=60 francs	*Shs.* 90=60 francs
French Francs . .	*Shs.* 20=980 francs	*Shs.* 19=980 francs
Australian £ . .	*Shs.*1,609=£A.100	*Shs.*1,605=£A.100
Egyptian £ . .	*Shs.*2,060=£E.100	*Shs.*2,050=£E.100

Chapter 5: Commerce

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The import and export figures given in the tables which follow relate solely to trade passing through the port of Aden. Overland trade from and to the Western Aden Protectorate is not recorded.